



Interview Summary: Superintendent Pat Morris (Ontario Provincial Police)

Supt. Morris was interviewed by Frank Au, Mark Pritchard, Eric Brousseau and Misha Boutilier on August 5, 2022. Questions about this summary should be directed to Eric Brousseau.

Background

Pat Morris is a Superintendent with the Ontario Provincial Police (**OPP**). He oversees the OPP's Provincial Operations Intelligence Bureau (**POIB**).

Supt. Morris has worked in tactical and strategic intelligence in relation to protest and dissent that may present issues for public safety, specifically in relation to the mandates of the hate crime and extremism unit and Provincial Anti-Terrorism Section. He has been involved in the policing response to events such as the G8/G20 in Kananaskis, First Nations protests in 2006-2007 in Caledonia, Idle No More, and events in Caledonia and Tyendinaga in 2020. He served as the co-lead the Primary Intelligence Investigative Team in the G8 and G20 in 2010, and has worked on the North American leaders' summit, Organization of American States meetings, and the 2010 Vancouver Olympics insofar as it impacted Ontario (in collaboration with the RCMP). He has worked in the Indigenous Policing Bureau, which houses the OPP's Provincial Liaison Team (**PLT**), a team that handles communication with and collection of information from protest participants. Finally, he has worked as an undercover operator and handled undercover operators for events of this nature.

Role of the OPP's POIB

Supt. Morris is the Bureau Commander for the POIB, which has 270 members and is comprised of six sections:

- **Intelligence operations:** this section deploys units throughout the province.
- **Provincial anti-terrorism section:** includes hate crimes and extremism unit.
- **Covert operations section:** this section engages in policy, procedure, and operational undertakings using undercover officers and confidential agents.
- **Criminal Intelligence Production Section:** this section has a tactical intelligence analytical, strategic intelligence analytical, provincial governance analytical, and all-source intelligence teams. Those analysts engage in crime analysis, intelligence analysis, and operational analysis to produce products to supplement and assist criminal investigations, intelligence probes, and major event planning. This section translates information obtained into intelligence products.



- **Protective services section:** this section protects the Premier, Lieutenant Governor, Solicitor General, Attorney General of Ontario, the PM, and internationally protected persons.
- **Integrated National Security Enforcement Team:** this section is the OPP's contribution within the Integrated National Security Team.

When it comes to assessing intelligence, POIB uses the terms “reliability” and “validity”:

- Reliability refers to the “reliability” of the source of information. Factors include the relationship with that source (i.e. person), the pedigree of the source and the past incidents wherein information was received. Further, reliability can also be utilized when determining the strength of other sources of information. This may include police observations, media reporting of editorializing, or social media broadcasts. The media, broadly speaking, and social media were an important source of information in this case because lots of small online media were producing information about the movement of participants in these events.
- Validity speaks the inherent logic or rationale of the information - the question of whether the information makes sense within the context of what POIB believes it knows and anticipates.

Development and Evolution of Project Hendon

Project Hendon is an ongoing POIB intelligence initiative engaged in collecting information, producing intelligence, and disseminating intelligence products.

In late 2019 and early 2020, POIB became aware of significant planning for “Shut Down Canada” by multiple entities. Around the same time, there was also the Wet’suwet’en protest. OPP began to collect information on those issues (with varying degrees of reliability) and put it through an analytical filter to produce intelligence. POIB cooperated with many impacted agencies, including RCMP and multiple law enforcement agencies. This was the start of Project Hendon.

At Supt. Morris’ direction, POIB formalized Project Hendon in February 2020. The idea was to broaden POIB’s collection in a resource-efficient manner in terms of protest events that presented a public safety impact. Critical infrastructure was a key component. In January and February 2020, Project Hendon’s focus was protest by Indigenous entities, and those allied with these entities, that incorporated criminal activity and/or illegal activity that presented a threat to public safety – much of which was associated to the issues emanating from Wet’suwet’en.

Project Hendon evolved throughout the pandemic to address new public safety challenges. Multiple grievances in society emerged, which were a mix of grievances against government policy and personal grievances against public officials like Premier



Ford and Prime Minister Trudeau. Movements crystallized around some of those ideas and grievances.

By spring 2021, there were significant anti-authoritarian and anti-governmental sentiments. In August 2021, POIB began looking at an emerging “patriot movement” and the associated anti-government sentiment. POIB communicated consistently to Project Hendon partners about these elements and what aspects of them presented a public safety threat.

In fall 2021, POIB saw a growing sentiment of frustration and more focused online rhetoric about violence. Project Hendon tried to identify where the concern was and where OPP should focus.

Project Hendon Reporting and Distribution

By summer 2021, Project Hendon was reporting weekly to its intelligence partners. By fall 2021, Project Hendon was providing bi-weekly intelligence reports.

Project Hendon briefings remained bi-weekly until January 13, 2022, at which point it became a weekly briefing. Following the next briefing on January 20, 2022, Supt. Morris arranged a teleconference among Hendon partners on January 21, 2022. Project Hendon provided daily strategic intelligence reports starting on January 22, 2022. Daily Project Hendon teleconferences began on January 24, 2022, and continued throughout the protest. OPS Insp. Bryden and Patterson and other OPS personnel participated in these teleconferences.

By the end of the protests, Project Hendon reports were being distributed to four separate lists:

- Group 1: Chiefs of York, Waterloo, Niagara, Hamilton, Toronto, Peel, Ottawa, Halton, OPP, Ontario Divisional Intelligence Officer of RCMP (**POJ List**)
- Group 2: 32 agencies (not all Ontario agencies), including Vancouver PD, Calgary police, SQ. The RCMP had several people in this group, including Federal Policing and Integrated National Security Enforcement Team
- Group 3: Impactful people within the OPP, including Critical Incident Commanders
- Group 4: the OPP Commissioner’s Command Team (**CCT**)

On January 13, 2022 (the date on which the first Hendon Report mentioned the convoy), the Hendon Report went to approximately 230 individuals. By the end of the protest, it was being distributed to approximately 300 people.

Chief Sloly was part of Group 1, and several OPS individuals were part of Group 2.



Hendon Reports were received by some of the constitutive components of INTERSECT (RCMP, SQ, OPS), which is an intelligence group organized by the OPS.

[Project Hendon Reporting on the Freedom Convoy](#)

Project Hendon began reporting on the “freedom convoy” on January 13, 2022.¹

In the Hendon Report dated January 20, 2022,² Supt. Morris considered (and still considers) the information regarding protestors blocking access to buildings in the City of Ottawa to be reliable and valid, since it came from the OPP’s PLT. Similarly, he believes the assessment that the convoy will disrupt the movement of traffic/goods and strain law enforcement capacity, and may attempt to disrupt the workings of government, was valid.

In the Hendon Report dated January 23, 2022,³ the assessment section raises the possibility for conflict between larger groups of truck drivers and smaller groups of ideologically-driven opportunists. According to Supt. Morris, there was not a single, large all-encompassing movement. Rather, there were many entities, movements, associations from church groups to ideological components to people whose employment was impacted. However, Supt. Morris does not believe there was a hardened kernel of extremist entities that had a plan to harm government, business and the people of Ottawa.

The Hendon Report dated January 24, 2022,⁴ reflects that POIB tried to get information on the number of vehicles and presence of specialized equipment from local police (mostly the RCMP out west, and SQ in Quebec).

The Hendon Report dated January 25, 2022,⁵ identified a “serious intelligence gap,” which was that POIB could not determine any specifics of the protestors’ plans aside from a large public order event in the downtown core with massive disruption due to positioning of vehicles and people, with no exit strategy.

On January 26, POIB alerted front-line officers in a bulletin that protestors claimed they would be in Ottawa until government agreed to their demands.⁶ POIB knew government would not do that, which suggested that protestors would be there for a long time. This

¹ **OPP00001176**

² **OPP00001024**

³ **OPP00001476**

⁴ **OPP00000833**

⁵ **OPP00001108**

⁶ **OPP00001494**



bulletin went to every OPP member. In addition, it encouraged OPP members to submit information to a centralized inbox so that Hendon could get real-time information.

Supt. Morris stated that by January 25-26, 2022, it was clear that the convoy involved a massive number of protestors, trucks and vehicles supporting them, and would include blockades and negative impacts to flow of business, and to government. By this point, POIB had serious concerns and felt that there would be gridlock and vehicular issues in Ottawa.

The Hendon Report dated January 27, 2022,⁷ references the intent to use an excavator and crane lift machine because protestors were unlikely to bring them if they were not going to use them. POIB had experience dealing with heavy equipment based on a July 2021 event in Mackenzie Meadows.

The Hendon Report dated January 28, 2022,⁸ states that truckers were frustrated because they cannot drive their trucks all the way to Parliament Hill. Organizers stated that they would surround the area with the goal of blocking traffic.

The Hendon Report dated February 3, 2022,⁹ refers to the protests as having the potential to develop into a national civil disobedience movement.

The Hendon Report dated February 7, 2022,¹⁰ refers to the movement as “potentially a national security risk.” Supt. Morris discussed this conclusion with his managers and analysts. Project Hendon used that phrase for a number of reasons:

- The protest was no longer just in Ottawa, but also in other areas like the Ambassador Bridge (which had an impact on sovereignty and commerce);
- There was the potential for movements aimed at other pieces of critical infrastructure (the Detroit-Windsor tunnel, Highway 402 preceding the Blue Water Bridge, Nipigon Bridge, Sault Ste. Marie, etc.);
- The longevity of movement and the growing frustration in Ottawa; and
- The growing frustration internationally regarding Canada’s reputation.

⁷ **OPP00001331**

⁸ **OPP00000815**

⁹ **OPP00001131**

¹⁰ **OPP00000831**



At the time, there was no specific, credible criminal intelligence of an egregious criminal or violent act. However, Supt. Morris was not aware of a precedent with so many actual or potential blockages to international border crossings.

The Hendon Report dated February 9, 2022, refers to threats to public safety, officer safety, and potentially to national security. Supt. Morris noted that at certain times, the environment was jovial and congenial. However, when police action occurred (POA notice or vehicle towing), the dynamic changed to be more aggressive. Around this time, POIB also became concerned about instances where information about police action became available to protestors. Supt. Morris communicated internally to POIB and to Hendon partners on this issue, and developed a different distribution list from himself to other intelligence officers which consisted of only 45 people. POIB had evidence of accidental or intentional leakage of information and wanted to batten down the hatches.

The use of Intelligence in Planning in Other Cities

In the second week of the protests, there was a significant threat to Toronto. POIB held extensive conversations with TPS and their intelligence people. POIB deployed officers to rallying points to determine the presence of trucks and people, as well as engaged with major incident group and highway safety division. Toronto used the intelligence differently and proactively to prevent, deter, and mitigate the impact of those planned actions. However, Supt. Morris was clear that Toronto faced a different form of threat — one that was shorter in time, and was not the focal point for the movement.

Supt. Morris focused mostly on Ottawa and Toronto, but he confirmed that the OPP did work in both Windsor and Sarnia. In those cases, there were differences in terms of how the intelligence was utilized. This resulted in a shorter period between the event and police action to end the event and reopen.

POIB Timeline

OPP Supt. McDonnell asked POIB to produce a timeline to assist with Comm. Carrique's appearance before a Parliamentary Committee.¹¹ Most of the document was written by a POIB analyst, although Supt. Morris drafted the portion regarding intelligence failures, and reviewed and approved the entire document.

Supt. Morris stated that the perception of foreign funding was an important element, even though no foreign influence was identified and most donors were Canadian. It gave the appearance that the government was vulnerable to destabilization and affected the government's status nationally and internationally.

¹¹ **OPP00001783**



The POIB Timeline refers to threats of violence being “omnipresent” because of the increasing frustration of the protestors, the increasing longevity of the event, and the increasing presence of police. Supt. Morris stated that the impact of a destabilized environment and online hyperbole makes it more likely that lone wolf attacks will occur. However, he acknowledged that most of POIB’s assessments say that there was no specific intelligence regarding a specific violent threat.

Intelligence failure can occur in different ways: failure to recognize potential threats, collect information, identify stakeholders, disseminate information in a timely manner, or analyze that information.

The POIB Timeline concludes that there was a failure to utilize intelligence in operational preparation, decision-making, and pro-active planning. This remains Supt. Morris’ view.

[Requests for Information / Intelligence made by Chief Sloly](#)

On February 11, 2022, Chief Sloly asked Supt. Morris to answer the following five questions about Ottawa, Toronto, the Ambassador Bridge, and the Blue Water Bridge:

1. Exact number of trucks in each location currently
2. What will the exact number of trucks be on Saturday (February 12)
3. Number of protestors in each location currently
4. Number of protestors in each location on Saturday (February 12, day of Toronto events)
5. What is the extremist involvement (there was media discussion of this at the time)

Chief Sloly asked that Supt. Morris answer the questions in writing based only on confirmed intelligence (which is difficult since it is regarding a future event). Supt. Morris noted that this was an unusual request. Supt. Morris sent answers to OPP Deputy Comm. Cox, and they were ultimately provided to OPS officer Mark Patterson.

On February 12, 2022, Supt. Morris gave a presentation to the OACP. It was clear that the Toronto events of that day had unfolded very differently than the events in Ottawa and had essentially wrapped up. Chief Sloly became angry and interjected, saying he did not want a comparison of Ottawa to Toronto. Chief Sloly claimed that he had gone through the Hendon Reports and there was no intelligence that would have assisted the OPS. Chief Sloly and Supt. Morris spoke privately after the meeting, during which they discussed the fact that Toronto’s actions were informed by what had already transpired in Ottawa. However, Supt. Morris reiterated that POIB had provided intelligence that was available and that should have informed OPS decision-making.

Also on February 12, 2022, Chief Sloly asked Supt. Morris to present to the OPSB. In preparation for that presentation, Supt. Morris reviewed all Hendon Reports from January 13 to January 29 to determine what information the OPP had provided, when, and to



whom. The presentation was scheduled for February 15, 2022, and was cancelled when Chief Sloly resigned.

Lessons Learned

Supt. Morris does not believe this was an intelligence failure. The information was collected in a timely manner, analyzed, intelligence was produced that provided an accurate picture of what would transpire. POIB shared all information that it possibly could. It engaged with CSIS and RCMP Integrated National Security Enforcement Team.

Supt. Morris noted that there can be a weakness in the tie between intelligence and operational planning. Anticipated events are often not taken with the gravity of events that have occurred, and proactivity to prevent and mitigate is not always present. Police services have many priorities and can under-prioritize events that have not yet transpired.

Supt. Morris was concerned that the intelligence that POIB was providing in documentary and verbal form was not being appropriately translated into operational action by the OPS.

Supt. Morris said he wished that more intelligence managers had participated in the Hendon calls so they could understand the impact to their areas. A lot of times, participation on Hendon calls was delegated to lower-level persons and intelligence analysts. Supt. Morris also noted that it was not always immediately apparent to him that the OPS members participating in the Hendon calls understood the gravity of the situation by January 21. (However, as time progressed (and by week of January 24), their grasp, impactful questions, and participation became more evident.)

More generally, Supt. Morris said the intelligence community would be better-served by individuals with a higher degree of authority participating in the teleconferences where intelligence is collected, shared, and discussed — those individuals are the advocates and influencers within their services for that intelligence. If the intelligence is given to a contract analyst who provides a report and then speaks with a detective and it takes time to go up the chain of command, there is less immediate impact.